

Deconstructing Disasters: A travelling film festival in south India

Saturday, 27 August 2005

Indiadisaster.org, the one-stop humanitarian website, is planning to organise a film festival in October 2005 with a focus on natural disasters and their response in India. The travelling festival called "Deconstructing Disasters" will feature about 10 films, writes Indiadisasters.org, Sunday, Bangalore, August 28, 2005 at <http://www.indiadisasters.org/>
Forwarded by Kim Mullard 300805.

The films will be stories of people coping with disasters even after their lives are torn apart. It will address the science, politics and ecology of disasters. And it will show humanitarian agencies' response to disasters and probe their efficacy and the challenges they face. In short, the focus will be on disaster preparedness, rehabilitation, rights and standards. The aim of the traveling film festival is to increase public awareness on natural disasters and rehabilitation, focusing on aspects of preparedness, rights and standards. As a primary activity, selected films will be screened in collaboration with select partners in and around Chennai, Kanyakumari and Thiruvananthapuram. The screenings will be followed by discussions, depending on the viewer profile.

As a follow-up, if resources and partners are available, there is a possibility of scaling up the festival to other cities and by including related events like a photo exhibition and book sales.

Ten highly communicative films on disasters in India brought out in the past five years will be selected. Entries will be invited through online documentary, media and humanitarian forums. Indiadisasters will collaborate with regional television channels, film clubs, humanitarian groups, community-based organisations and educational institutions for screening as well as publicity for the festival - including telecast of some of the festival films and related footage. Digital filming of the film festival process will be done with special focus on the response to the films and discussions in villages and rehabilitation camps.

With this festival indiadisasters.org intends that the viewers of the festival films and television programmes have a basic understanding of how disasters disrupt lives and livelihoods, and how people try to cope despite all odds. Also to get an understanding of the relationship between planning, development and disaster vulnerability.

The festival will be an initial exposure to some of the best community-based disaster preparedness and response initiatives from different parts of India. It aims to bring to about an appreciation of different problems such as psychosocial complication and disabilities, and special needs of women children in the event of a disaster.

The festival is an effort to generate an added media interest in aspects of rehabilitation at a time when reporting on the issue is becoming less and less. It can be an opportunity to flag off certain key issues that can be followed up during the first anniversary coverage.

The Kairali television, Coastal Action Network (Tamil Nadu), Kerala Independent Fishworkers Federation, Press Club, Thiruvananthapuram and Kanyakumari Rehabilitation Resource Centre have agreed to be indiadisaster.org?s partners in this endeavour.

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